

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 AID-20 AGR-20 EB-11 SWF-02

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R 271530Z AUG 74

FM AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8701

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

AMEMBASSY LOME

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

AMEMBASSY PARIS

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE NIAMEY 2870

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ECON EAID NG

SUBJECT: MEETING WITH PRESIDENT KOUNTCHE

REFC A.NIAMEY 2855 B. NIAMEY 2859

DURING MEETING WITH PRESIDENT KOUNTCHE AUGUST 26 TO DISCUSS FLOOD
DISASTER SITUATION AS REPORTED REFTELS, KOUNTCHE ALSO TOUCHED
ON FOLLOWING SUBJECTS:

1) FLOOD WARNINGS ON NIGER. REFERRING TO PRESS REPORTS
FROM BAMAKO THAT NIGER HAD RISEN SEVERAL METERS IN LAST FEW
DAYS AS A RESULT OF HEAVY RAINS IN MALI, KOUNTCHE SAID THAT
THIS WAS ALARMING NEWS AND RECALLED NIGER FLOODS OF 1968
WHEN RIVER BROKE ITS BANKS IN NUMEROUS PLACES, FLOODING
TOWN OF SAY AS WELL AS SOME OF NIGER'S MOST FERTILE
FARMING LANDS AROUND GAYA. KOUNTCHE SAID HE WAS WATCHING
SITUATION CAREFULLY, BUT WAS NOT SURE WHAT COULD BE DONE
EXCEPT TO EVACUATE SAY AT APPROPRIATE TIME AND PREPARE FOR
ANOTHER FOOD AND PEOPLE EMERGENCY IF CURRENT RISING OF RIVER
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CONTINUED.

2) FOOD FOR WORK PROGRAMS. COMMENTING ON FLOOD SITUATION, KOUNTCHE HAD A FEW SHARP COMMENTS TO MAKE ABOUT QUALITY OF ROAD ENGINEERING. RAINS HAD CUT MAJOR ROADS IN NUMEROUS PLACES EITHER WASHING OUT SURFACE OR COVERING BRIDGES WHICH HAD BEEN BUILD WITHOUT ANY THOUGHT OF HIGH WATERS. THIS SUGGESTED POOR DESIGN WORK AND CONSTRUCTION WHICH HE PLANNED TO INVESTIGATE. FYI. ROADS TO WHICH KOUNTCHE WAS REFERRING HAVE BEEN BUILD BY EUROPEANS, MOSTLY FRENCH, CONSTRUCTION COMPANIES. END FYI. KOUNTCHE WENT ON TO SAY THAT ONE OF FIRST TASKS OF GOVERNMENT AFTER RAINS WAS TO MOBILIZE LABOR FORCES INCLUDING UNEMPLOYED YOUTH AND PUT THEM TO WORK ON ROAD RECONSTRUCTION. HE NOTED THAT THIS TIED IN NICELY WITH PROPOSED FOOD FOR WORK PROGRAMS, WHICH AID MISSION DIRECTOR BARN HAD BEEN DISCUSSING WITH MINISTER OF DEVELOPMENT SANI. I AGREED WE WOULD KEEP IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH GON TO COORDINATE OUR PROPOSED FOOD FOR WORK PROGRAMS WITH GON PLANS.HECK

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